



Minister S.P. Velumani chaired a meeting of municipal administration and water supply department

Don't politicise Cauvery water issue



— G.K. Vasan
Former Union minister for shipping

OTHER STORIES

More fishermen held by SL navy

Rameswaram: The Sri Lankan navy has arrested 11 TN fishermen, hours after they apprehended 36 fishermen hailing from a village in Pudukkottai district and this coastal town on Wednesday while fishing near Neduntheevu and Katchatheevu islet, a fisheries department official said. While the 11 fishermen were arrested on Wednesday midnight, 36 fishermen were apprehended in the morning on charges of crossing the IMBL, said Gopinath, assistant director of fisheries department. The navy personnel, who came in ships, fired in the air threatening the fishermen to leave the area. They also sank a mechanised boat worth about ₹40 lakh besides damaging several crafts and fishing nets, they said. All the arrested fishermen were taken to Thalaimannar and Kankesanthurai to be produced in courts. — PTI

Alagiri clarifies on Khushbu issue

Chennai: Expelled DMK south zone organising secretary M.K. Alagiri on Thursday clarified that his comment on Khushbu quitting DMK pertained only to a mass exodus of party leaders under treasurer Stalin's Leadership. Reacting to a DC story that appeared on Wednesday, Alagiri said that he had not faulted Stalin's family for Khushbu quitting DMK. But he maintained that the "saree-clad sidekicks of Stalin who stay in the party would leave the party en masse soon."

Steps to market Poompuhar crafts extensively in country

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

With the exquisitely carved stone idols and the Thanjavur paintings receiving good patronage, Poompuhar has plans to extensively promote these besides brass and bronze products by encouraging cluster development.

Describing the response to the various exhibitions organised by Poompuhar in India and abroad as "very encouraging", a senior official said handicraft articles

worth ₹34.20 lakh were sold in an exhibition held at Singapore. At present, the corporation is exporting traditional handicraft products to Singapore, Malaysia, the UK and US.

Bronze icons, brass ornamental lamps, rosewood furniture and Thanjavur paintings are some of the important handicraft items exported.

Meanwhile, work on converting the production units of the corporation at Swamimalai for bronze icons, Nachiarkoil for artistic br-

ass lamps and Thanjavur for traditional art plates as flagship units of Poompuhar has begun. These centres would be made part of the tourist itinerary of both domestic and foreign tourists to popularise the ancient crafts of the state.

Detailed proposals seeking financial assistance of ₹90 lakh have been sent to the district collector, Thanjavur to upgrade the production centres in Thanjavur, Nachiarkoil, Swamimalai at a cost of ₹30 lakh each, it is said.

OTA cadets get training on treating sudden cardiac arrest

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

As many as 500 cadets and 20 officials from the Officers' Training Academy (OTA) learnt the medical procedure for treating sudden cardiac arrests apart from snake bites and bleeding controls at an interactive session organised by Survival Instincts.

American Red Cross certified instructor Anoop Madhavan conducted the session.

In India, it is estimated that the annual incidence of sudden cardiac arrest is 0.55 per 1000 population and the survival rate is less than one per cent, because reaching the hospital on time or getting a well-equipped ambulance with-

in 10 minutes is difficult.

"By providing assistance through cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation using an automated external defibrillator (AED), virtually anyone can save a life. This is an easily acquired skill, which can be effectively imparted to any person within a few hours by a certified trainer," Anoop said.



PARTY BONHOMIE

Former Union minister E.V.K.S. Elangovan offers cake to TNCC chief B.S. Gnanadesikan during the celebration of party vice-president Rahul Gandhi's birthday at state party headquarters Satyamurthy Bhavan in Chennai on Thursday.

— DC

DC | SPECIAL

■ Civic body takes cue from London, Chicago & Johannesburg

Digital mapping of city landscape

C.S. KOTTESWARAN | DC
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

Bad news is in the offing for land sharks and property tax evaders in Chennai, as the city corporation has commenced the geographic information mapping process followed in cities of London, Chicago and Johannesburg under which all properties in the city will be mapped, maintained and monitored. In the longer run, the digital data base will prevent land grabbing of gov-

ernment properties, admit corporation officials.

Under the massive programme, the GIS data base will provide geographic feature maps, detailed information on streets and individual properties. Data like density, parking requirements, building lines, utilisation of area whether residential or commercial, ward boundary details and district territories can be also be marked and assessed, when required. In a phased manner, even the number of

trees in Chennai can be integrated into the server, sources explained.

"Last week officers were assigned for the survey and it is proposed that a private consultant will take up the massive process. It will take some time for this project take shape as it is a massive exercise," a senior corporation official told DC.

Explaining the GIS application, a corporation engineer said that the project, in the longer run, will help maintain tax assess-

ments and gradually help revenue authorities to recover property tax dues. Under the project, an interactive digital map will be evolved which can even display fire stations, polling booths, corporation schools and transit routes.

This is the latest system followed in foreign countries. With the present top brass in Ripon Buildings keen on revising property tax, the new GIS system will reduce the work load for the revenue depart-

ent and will also enhance the corporation's administration and transparency. The components of the GIS database will include land information, planning, community facilities and property assessment.

The corporation had signed international city agreements with San Antonio and Kuala Lumpur for cultural exchanges and technical expertise, but there have been no technological breakthroughs over the years when it comes to civic administration.



ZOO INSPECTION

State forest minister M.S.M. Anandan, animal husbandry minister T.K.M. Chinniah and senior forest officials during inspection at Vandalur zoo on Thursday.

— DC

BJP allies welcome Mullaiperiyar dam panel

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

BJP allies DMDK and PMK on Thursday welcomed the Centre's decision to constitute a supervisory committee on the Mullaiperiyar dam to implement a Supreme Court judgment delivered in May allowing TN to raise the storage level to 142 feet.

In a statement, DMDK chief Vijayakanth thanked PM Modi's cabinet for implementing the apex court judgement. "The Centre's

decision will help mitigate the distress of the farmers in Madurai, Theni, Dindigul, Ramanathapuram and Sivaganga districts," he said.

Mr Vijayakanth said that the state was also expecting the Centre to fulfil their legitimate demands on sharing of Cauvery and Pallar river waters. "I once again welcome the speedy action of NDA government which acted without any bias," he said.

PMK founder Dr S. Rama-

doss said that the decision to setup a supervisory committee ended 35 years long suffering of the farmers of five downstream districts who were dependent on Mullaiperiyar water for irrigation. "For the welfare of TN farmers, Modi has another important work to accomplish by constituting a Cauvery Management Board as per the tribunal's verdict," he said, adding that this move would help farmers in 15 Cauvery delta districts.

Porur flyover awaits revised sanction order

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

The Porur flyover work continues to remain stalled as the state highways department still awaits revised administrative sanction (RAS) from state government to resume construction activities which came to a halt three years ago, following non-shifting of a water pipeline.

Sources in the highways department said that the flyover's design has been modified so that there is no need to shift the main water pipelines from Chembarambakkam lake for the project. "We went for a flyover design change as repeated attempts by the Chennai metro water and the highways department to shift the water lines failed," sources said.

The work on the Porur flyover which began way back in March 2010, was suspended after inordinate delay in shifting of water pipelines and land acquisition. Only 10 per cent of the construction was completed when the contract was foreclosed in 2011. The change in flyover design and

● Flyover design has been modified so that there is no need to shift the water pipelines

cost escalation due to increase in construction materials requires revised administrative sanction for the project, the official said.

"We have sought state government's sanction for the flyover. We are hopeful of receiving it soon," sources said. When the flyover work began in 2010, the project cost was ₹35 crore. Now the cost has escalated to over ₹50 crore.

Once government gives its revised sanction, bids will be floated for the project. "Awarding of contract will take at least two months from the date of receiving the RAS. Flyover construction will be completed 18 months after issue of the work order to the contractor," the official added.

The construction of the flyover is expected to save time and fuel for motorists coming and bound for Guindy, Kunderathur, St. Thomas Mount, Poonamallee and Vadapalani.



State transport minister V. Senthil Balaji interacting with passengers of an MTC bus regarding bus service and conduct of crew on Thursday.

— DC

748 candidates file accounts of poll expenditure

Chennai, June 19: A total of 748 candidates have filed their accounts of expenditure in connection with the recent Lok Sabha polls in the state.

"In Tamil Nadu, in all the 39 constituencies, a total of 845 candidates contested in the general elections to Lok Sabha, 2014. Out of which, on the due date of submission of election accounts 748 candi-

dates have so far lodged the accounts on time with district election officers," an Election Commission release said.

As for the Alandur assembly constituency, 10 out of 14 candidates have lodged the accounts on time, it added. As per Section 77 of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951, every candidate submit the account of all expenditure in

● Under Sec 77 of Representation of Peoples Act, 1951, candidates submit accounts of poll expenses to EC

connection with the election to Election Commission officials within 30 days from the date of declaration of result of the election.

— PTI

TECH | CENTRES

■ Agro knowledge facilities being set up at total cost of ₹15 crore

Farmers' hub to come up in 10 places across TN

J.V. SIVA PRASANNA
KUMAR | DC
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

Farmers across Tamil Nadu will not just depend upon traditional practice but would soon get to learn to keep pace with the technological advances in the field and prosper, thanks to an innovative effort by the state government in forming farmers' hubs across the state.

The initiative aimed at en-

suring knowledge flow on technological developments to the farming community, will lead to the establishment of farmers' hubs at ten places across TN. "These hubs will disseminate information on innovations and technical advancements in the field. They will be set up at a total cost of ₹15 crore," an official said.

Also, the hubs would help to solve all field-oriented problems pertaining to agriculture and allied depart-

ments under one roof. The government is focused on bridging the knowledge gap and on enhancing the technical and managerial competence of the farmers, extension functionaries and other stakeholders. Periodic demonstrations, agro-fairs, field trips and workshops will also be organised to equip the farmers.

According to official sources, each hub would have an ultra-modern soil testing lab, seed testing and inspec-

tion facility. Besides, it will house a spacious meeting hall with latest facilities, waiting rooms for farmers, automated teller machine (ATM) and internet facility in addition to godowns and ramps for differently-abled persons.

Offices of the assistant directors for horticulture and agriculture, seed certification and seed inspectors will also function at these proposed hub.

The hubs have been plan-

ned in Dindigul, Coimbatore, Erode, Kancheepuram, Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur, Tiruchi, Thoothukudi and Virudhunagar districts.

Further, around ₹3.31 crore would be spent to implement a novel concept of farm crop management system (FCMS) on pilot basis in six districts — Tiruchy, Coimbatore, Erode, Villore, Thiruvavur and Virudhunagar, focusing on inclusive growth in agriculture.

CM writes to Modi again on fishermen

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

Calling the most recent arrest of 46 fishermen from TN on Wednesday as a 'belligerent act of the Lankan navy', chief minister Jayalalithaa exhorted Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday to secure the immediate release of all the arrested fishermen and their 11 boats.

Twenty-four fishermen in six mechanised boats from Kottaiappattinam were nabbed on Wednesday. In another incident, 22 from Rameswaram were also taken into custody a little later. In her most recent missive to the PM, Jaya urged the Centre to use diplomatic channels for TN fishermen and their boats, while thanking Modi for his immediate response on the previous two occasions in securing the release and repatriation of all fishermen from Tamil Nadu.

"My government strongly believes that the un-constitutional Indo-Sri Lankan agreements of 1974 and 1976 should be nullified and the traditional rights of our fishermen restored at the earliest. Our stand is that Katchatheevu has always been a part of India, geographically, culturally and historically and needs to be retrieved," the chief minister said.

Jaya pointed out that while state government encouraged fishermen level talks and had facilitated two rounds of talks in Chennai and Colombo, there was no significant progress made due to the obstructionist stance of Sri Lankan officials. "But we are committed to continuing the dialogue process," Jaya said.

Expressing contentment that the state and Centre were in agreement on ensuring the livelihood, safety and security of fishermen, the chief minister said that the state and Centre could find a lasting solution to this fishermen issue by working in tandem. "The vexatious issue requires a strong and sustained diplomatic response so that a lasting solution is found," she said.

PT chief backs Karuna over new poll system

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, JUNE 19

DMK president M. Karunanidhi found some support for his demand for proportionate representation in Parliament and assembly with ally Puthiya Tamizhagam leader Dr Krishnasamy on Thursday proposing a nation-wide drive to muster support for the demand.

Dr Krishnasamy visited M. Karunanidhi at his Gopalapuram residence and requested him to hold a national-level conference to garner support across the country for proportionate representation in Parliament and assembly.

He said this to reporters after the meeting with Karunanidhi. Slowly recove-

ring from the party's worst ever poll rout, the DMK president was the first to question the existing electoral system and rake up the proportionate representation in Parliament and assembly.

The DMK did not manage to send one person to the lower house though the party secured around 22 per cent votes in the 16th LS polls.

The DMK president also drew reference from history, recalling the statements of its founder and former CM C.N. Annadurai to justify his demand. However, the same DMK invited easy criticism for being silent on the demand during the last four decades when it continually enjoyed power in the state.